

THE CHALLENGE OF ETHNIC NEIGHBORHOODS TO PLANNERS
A CASE OF CHINATOWN, NEW YORK CITY

by

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B.A. College of Chinese Culture, 1970

A NON-THESIS REPORT

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree

MASTER OF REGIONAL AND COMMUNITY PLANNING

Department of Regional and Community Planning
College of Architecture and Design

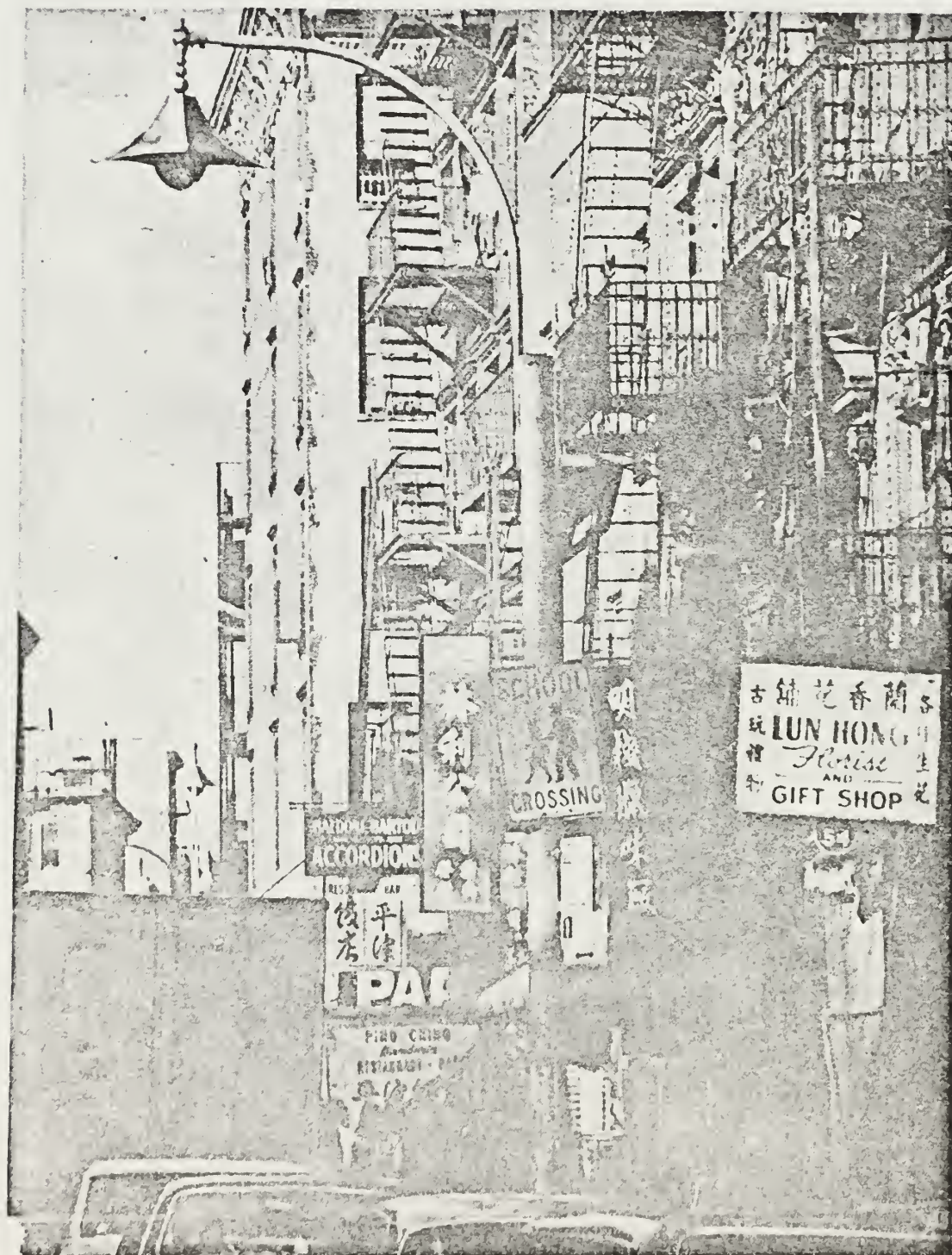
KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas
1975

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PREFACE

During the entire period leading to completion of this report, Professor John Selfridge, of the Department of Regional and Community Planning, my major advisor on my committee, provided enormous amounts of time to counseling, question and encourage me. I am deeply grateful to him. I am also grateful to Professor Henry Camp of Department of Sociology, who served as the committee member, for his advice and assistance in this report. Thanks also goes to Professor V.P.Deines, Head of the Department of Regional and Community Planning, for his warm encouragement in the completion of this report.

Manhattan, Kansas
March, 1975

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
CHAPTER I- INTRODUCTION.....	1
The purpose of this report.....	3
Methodology.....	3
CHAPTER II- THE CHINESE EXPERIENCE IN UNITED STATES.....	4
CHAPTER III- GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING AND CULTURAL ROLE OF NEW YORK CITY'S CHINATOWN.....	13
CHAPTER IV- THE SOCIAL ASPECTS OF CHINATOWN.....	16
Family.....	16
Employment.....	16
Education.....	21
Health and elderly problems.....	22
Youth and crime problems.....	24
Organizations.....	27
CHAPTER V- PHYSICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS OF CHINATOWN.....	29
Housing situation.....	29
Commercial space.....	31
Traffic situation.....	31
CHAPTER VI- RECOMMENDATIONS.....	33
Social aspects.....	33
Physical aspects.....	39
CHAPTER VII- THE CHALLENGE TO PLANNERS.....	44

	Page
CHAPTER VIII- CONCLUSION.....	53
FOOTNOTE.....	56
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	58
APPENDIX.....	60

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

To many Americans the heritage of the Chinese in America means the colonies of Chinese in the major United States cities, such as San Francisco, New York, Washington D.C., Los Angeles, and others.

These are only veneers of the Orient, where during the Chinese new year exploding fire crackers awaken the golden dragon each spring. To the people of a past era, the Chinatown and the Chinese means other things--- a mysterious people crowded in corridors, resideing in dark alleys with their houses of gambling, prostitution, opium dens and hatchet men.

One hundred years ago, there were many Chinese settlements on the western frontier, from north to south, from west to east. From Washington south to Oregon and into California. Eastward to Nevada and as far as Deadwood, S.D. But these settlements, and many others, have faded away. The Chinese left little or no written records, only many miles of unmarked stone fences and wild flowers and trees from a distant land, blooming and growing in the solitude of the Mother lode.

In those early days, the Chinese came as strangers. They worked in the mines; they reclaimed the swamp land; and they tilled American soils, harvested crops and tended gardens, with their hands, simple tools and horse-drawn carts, they

moved mountains to build the railroads, so that the trains could travel throughout the west. But, suddenly, the Americans said to them that the Chinese must go, because they have monopolized the industry. driven the white workers and their family to despair. The Americans organized to drive them out. Mass meetings were organized that inflamed minds throughout the west--- the cry went out: "The Chinese must go!"

But, they did not all go. Many of them abandoned the mines, fields, and ships, left for home. But some of them with their children, stayed. They isolated themselves in the slums of many major cities. There, their children's children are growing up.

Today, to most outsiders, Chinatown is an interesting, colorful and exciting place for people to go to experience the ancient Chinese Culture. However, to the resident Chinese, Chinatown is a place where some are "at home", and others are helplessly trapped.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT:

The purpose of this report is twofold: First, it will present the existing community's problems. However, to obtain a thorough understanding of those problems, the report will present the background of the Chinese immigrants in United States. The weight of this past seems to be an integral part of the consciousness of people in the community and to continuously affect their behavior. The past is an organic part of the present: its vestiges are variable in attitudes, physical edifices, and institutions. Ultimately, the causes for much of what is observed in the present in fact lies in the past. Secondly, it will attempt to suggest strategies toward a solution for the ethnic community's problems in the United States.

METHODOLOGY:

The methodology of this report included:

1. Interviewing with local residents and organizations.
2. Literature review of information available from both Chinese and English publications.
3. Personal observations.

CHAPTER II

THE CHINESE EXPERIENCE IN UNITED STATES

The Chinese in United States has many unusual characteristics that can only be understood in historical terms. A few of the more significant historical factors, summarized below, help to clarify the composition of the population today. Chinese immigration to the United States can be divided into five basic periods:

1850-1882:

Chinese labor was recruited to work the gold fields of California, build railroads and clear forests in the western United States. Virtually all of these immigrants were male, and almost all of them came from the immediate environs of Canton. The heavy preponderance of immigration from Canton area occurred because Canton was the only open port in China until 1842.¹ This migration pattern was strengthened by family ties- younger men following relatives into new countries.² In the struggle for existence, the Chinese had proven to their employers that they were better laborers and were more economical to hire than the other workers. Anti-Chinese feelings were high around the mining sections of California, and the Chinese laborers were finally driven away from the mines after many bloody riots.³ Driven out by their white competitors from the mines the Chinese subsequently became

the backbone of the labor force used in the construction of the western end of the trans-continental railway. The Chinese were employed extensively in Californian agricultural work, fisheries, and as domestic servants.⁴

Despite the obvious Chinese contribution to a growing nation, they were not really accepted as part of it. The Chinese, after all, were different. They worked too hard, ate strange food, dressed and spoke peculiarly, and kept to themselves.

Almost from the day the first Chinese stepped off the ship in this country the cry of "yellow peril"⁵ was heard across the continent. Thus, while the Chinese were helping to build the west, the country was building a wall of exclusion around the Chinese. During the 1860's, 1870's and 1880's, laws passed by local, state, and federal government to harass the Chinese were practically endless. The Chinese could not own land, their testimony in courts of law was declared null and void,⁶ and they were excluded from all but a few very special areas of the major cities.

1882-1924:

From 1870 to about 1881, a number of relatively large-scale demonstrations and conventions were held in support of Chinese exclusion.

In 1882, the first Exclusion Act was passed by Congress.

The Act denied naturalization to all Chinese and excluded almost all Chinese immigrants. The result was a declining Chinese population in the United States as many of the men, especially the more successful ones, returned to their families.⁷

1924-1946:

The second Exclusion Act forbid male laborers in this country from bringing their wives to the United States by allowed a small number of merchants and students.⁸ The result was a gradual increase in the United States Chinese communities. By this time, old Chinatown was a man's town. Males outnumbered females by a ratio of 50 to 1 by 1900. (see Table 1). Most of the men were married before they left China but did not bring their wives to this country. Social life in the normal sense of the word was non-existent. The males amused themselves as other resourceless and homeless males around the world have often done. They spent their leisure time in restaurants, pool-rooms, gambling dens, burlesque shows and movies.⁹ However, the men soon found other forms of entertainment and enjoyment when a few "smart" merchants began to illegally import slave girls from Hong Kong and opium from India. Grasping hold of the poor, lonely immigrants. The Tongs, a secret form of organization in Canton of old China, soon gained control over the trafficking of slave girls and opium.

TABLE 1

The Chinese immigrants into New York State (A large percentage of these people settled in New York City) and the historical preponderance of males in the Chinese community. Compare with other races in the United States.

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>MALE</u>	<u>FEMALE</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>M/100F</u>	<u>RATIO OF AMERICAN</u>		
					<u>WHITE</u>	<u>BLACK</u>	<u>INDIAN</u>
1880	897	12	909	7,475	104	98	105
1890	2,902	33	2,935	8,794	105	100	107
1900	7,028	142	7,170	4,949	105	99	102
1910	5,065	201	5,266	2,520	107	99	104
1920	5,240	553	5,793	948	104	99	105
1930	8,649	1,016	9,665	851	103	97	105
1940	11,777	1,954	13,731	603	101	95	105
1950	14,875	5,296	20,171	281	99	94	109
1960	23,406	14,167	37,573	165	97	93	101
1970	43,457	37,117	80,574	117	98	93	101

Source: Census of Population, Volume 1, Part 1

General Population Characteristic.

Table 44, pp. 1-145.

These types of exploitation proved so profitable that it soon became a common business practice within the old Chinese community.

1947-1964:

The immigration law was changed again in 1943,^{*} but its impact was not felt until after World War II, when the total annual immigration increased significantly and the number of female immigrants increased dramatically. After 1953, the emphasis shifted from a preponderance of females to a balanced family migration.

During this period of time, many Chinese scholars and students have entered United States. Among them, many have become to very distinguished scientists, architects, engineers, and physicians, included the winners of The Noble Price in Physics, Dr. C.C. Young and Dr. C.D. Lee.

On August of 1953, when the Refugee Act was passed in lieu of the annual quota of 105, special authorization was given by Congress to admit 2,000 Chinese refugees from Hong Kong.^{*} In addition, Chinese aliens living in the United States on or before August of 1953 became eligible for adjustment of status to permanent residence.

With the passage of the McCarran-Walter Act on June of 1952, Chinese and other Asians living in the United States could become naturalized as American citizens for the first time in the history of America.¹⁰

* See Appendix

After 1964:

The biggest and perhaps the most significant change in immigration law occurred in October of 1965 when Congress enacted Public Law 89-236.¹¹ This new law does away with the National Origins Quota System which had determined the number of immigrants admitted to the United States from various countries over the last 40 years. The Chinese immigration once again surged upward. The extent and effect of this increased immigration is discussed more fully in the following paragraphs.

The rate of natural increase of the Chinese population has grown steadily since 1943 as more and more women have come into the country. But this type of population growth has minimum impact on Chinatown because young, child bearing families are those most likely to move to other parts of the city or to the suburbs. The primary factor in Chinese population increase is immigration. (see Table 2,3.)

Already, it is evident that the number of those waiting to immigrate to the United States from Hong Kong and Taiwan is great. This could amount to 20,000 to 30,000 a year. It is not known exactly how many of these immigrants might become residents of New York's Chinatown. However, according to the "United" magazine, a Chinese publication in New York City, about half of them come to the east coast and about 80 percent of this group eventually settle in Chinatown. They may stay for a long time, or they may

TABLE 2
Chinese in New York City

	<u>MALE</u>			<u>FEMALE</u>			<u>TOTAL</u>		
	1950	1960	1970	1950	1960	1970	1950	1960	1970
Manhattan	10,560	13,824	25,542	3,127	6,937	20,708	13,687	20,761	46,250
Bronx	666	13,532	2,560	330	1,135	2,225	996	2,667	4,785
Brooklyn	1,555	2,742	6,236	713	1,894	5,543	2,268	4,636	11,779
Queens	754	2,447	6,449	501	2,138	6,406	1,225	4,584	12,855
S.I.	92	113	289	31	69	250	123	182	539
Total	13,627	20,658	41,076	4,072	12,173	35,132	18,329	32,831	70,208

Source: U. S. Census of population

Characterics of the population

New York Section.

TABLE 3

Chinese immigrant aliens by year total numbers

<u>Year</u>	<u>Annual total</u>
1945	109
1950	1,289
1955	2,628
1960	3,672
1965	4,769
1970	17,956
1971	17,622
1972	22,730

Source: Annual report of U.S. Bureau of
Immigration and Naturalization.

leave after a period of acculturation and transition.

Besides those legally immigrants from Hong Kong and Taiwan, there are some illegal immigrants who enter this country each year. At least a quarter to a third of these illegal aliens will silently dissolve into the streets of New York's Chinatown.¹² These reformed immigration procedures have had cataclysmic effects on the Chinatown population. Now, with the massive influx of new immigrants, Chinatown has reverted to a largely foreign born population.

The days are over when the Chinese laborer would come to America for a feverish stint of money making. Those who settle in Chinatown today have made a irrevocable break with the past. No longer do the elderly will that their bones be shipped back to their "old home". Even the old illegal aliens from China who cannot become citizens, yet can not be deported, have grown resigned to the American limbo in which they will languish for eternity. If Chinatown has suddenly erupted with unprecedented social problems, it may be that for first time it is populated by citizens instead of sojourners, by women and children as well as men.

CHAPTER III

GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING AND CULTURAL ROLE OF N.Y.C.'s CHINATOWN

Chinatown, like most areas of New York City, can be described in many ways- as a particular geographic section of the city; an interesting place to visit; a place to start a new life or to preserve old cultural ties; or as a ghetto. Each view is worth examining.

1. Chinatown as a geographical area:

The core of Chinatown is the seven or eight block area bounded by Canal, Baxter, Worth, Park Row and Bowery St. In this area is found the greatest concentration of Chinese restaurants, shops, grocery stores, social and political organizations, family, trade, and commerce associations, schools and apartments.

Most people of New York and the tourist know this area as Chinatown, but to the residents it is only the center. The core of Chinatown is surrounded by an expanding mass of apartments and old lofts that serve as the homes and working spaces of the majority of Chinese in the area.

The boundaries of the supporting area are not sharply defined. In general, they extend to Broome St. on the north, to Allen St. and Pike Slip on the east, to the East River on the south, and to Center St. on the west.

2. Chinatown as a tourist attraction:

Most outsiders see Chinatown as a glimpse of the Orient. They come to see the sights and patronize its specialty restaurants. To this extent, New York City's Chinatown is a tour-

ist attraction.

3. Chinatown as an area of social transition:

For the new commers, Chinatown meets an essential need. Many of them have little or no knowledge of English; most are not prepared for the cultural adjustments of the United States;¹³ others are sponsored by relatives who live in Chinatown. Where they can speak Chinese, buy familiar food and supplies, and feel at ease. Here, he may find his first job, enroll his children in school, and begin a new life.

4. Chinatown as accultural-social center:

The Chinese who live and trade in Chinatown and those who have their associations there are predominantly Cantonese.¹⁴ Many of the associations and a majority of the restaurants, stores, and other commercial establishments are owned and operated by Cantonese Chinese. For these people, Chinatown is more like the old village center-the place where they attend association meetings and socialize with friends. It serves as a focus for the cultural and social customs and institutions that they want to preserve in this country. It is also the place to celebrate festivals and the new year, the place for their children's Chinese schools, and a place they can identigy as their own.

5. Chinatown as a regional center:

Many Chinese who do not live in Chinatown, have little to do with its social and cultural life. To them, Chinatown is

unlike the China they knew and is attractive only as a source of supply for foodstuffs, Chinese books and other special goods. These Chinese will visit occasionally to shop, to eat, they may come from New Jersey, Connecticut, and other areas.¹⁵

6. Chinatown as a wholesale center:

Least known among its many functions is Chinatown's role as a wholesale distribution center. Early every morning the streets of Chinatown are clogged with trucks loading food and other goods for distribution to Chinese restaurants and shops throughout the metropolitan area. Many of the stores operate as both retail and wholesale outlets.

7. Chinatown as a ghetto:

To many second and third generation Chinese who are growing up in a changing society, Chinatown is a cage, they feel it limits their freedom to choose a life style and identity of their own, many want to leave, but they cannot because of loyalty to their parents, financial difficulty, or other reasons, Chinese family ties are still very strong by American standards. The young people are frequently torn between the values of freedom and mobility and loyalty to their parents who still may not be able to speak English and are thus afraid to leave Chinatown. For teenage immigrants, freedom of choice is frequently even more limited. They are young enough to acquire many values of the society yet find little help in overcoming their language difficulties and other problems of social adjustment and technical skills.

CHAPTER IV

THE SOCIAL ASPECTS OF CHINATOWN1. Family:

The immigrant family today usually consists of husband and wife, generally near middle age, with several children. The children may be in their teens or younger. The man can generally find work soon, most likely working in a restaurant, a laundry or some other low skilled job. The mother will usually go to work in the garment industry in the Chinatown area. If both of them work, the family can expect an income of about \$7,000 per year.¹⁶ But this will be about the maximum they can hope to earn during their stay here. Since most of them do not speak English at all. The children, if they are still of primary school age, can hope to learn English well, go on to school and eventually can adjust to this society. However, if the children are already past early teens and do not have a good knowledge of English, it will be very hard for them to learn the language without special help. Most of them do not get this help and consequently are limited to jobs in Chinatown for about \$90 per week.

2. Employment:

The hustle and bustle that outsiders see on the streets of Chinatown may seem the business in Chinatown is booming, yes, if one is young and willing to work, one can find a job and earn a very low standard living.

According to the Chinatown Report '69,¹⁷ that the unemployment rate in Chinatown almost twice the U.S. unemployment. Among those who are employed, males are predominantly engaged in the restaurant business and females in the clothing industry.¹⁸ very few are in the skilled professional category. For the residents of Chinatown, there is no doubt that they have been unable to obtain as great a share of the wealth as anticipated upon immigrating into U.S. This is indicated by the high employment rate in blue collar jobs. In any case, the concentration of people holding low-paying jobs in Chinatown is even more than the non-whites in this country. (See Table 4.)

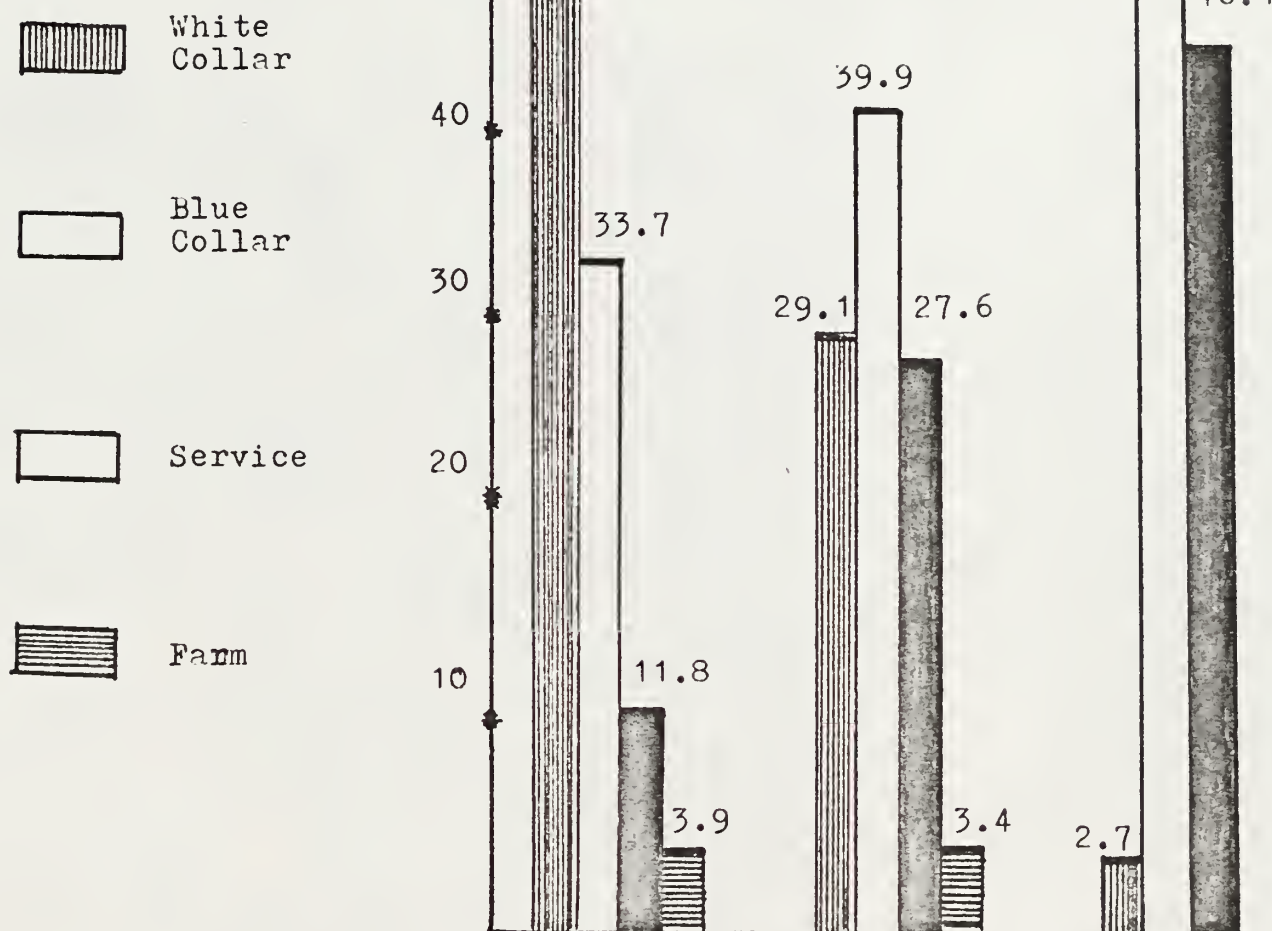
Many of those employed have to work more than 40 hours a week. Thus, the average family has both parents working and working long hours. This can partly explain why most parents have little time for recreation, for their children, and for social activities.¹⁹ Besides the job category and long hours working, low wage is another character of the employment picture in Chinatown.

The garment industry in Chinatown consists of about 125 factories, most of them are owned by Chinese. The total employment of these factories is 6,000 to 8,000²⁰ and nearly all of the workers are Chinese women. Most of these women do not know English, and they do not know anything about minimum wage laws.

The weirdly mingled noises of a Chinatown garment factory

TABLE 4

Percentage
Distribution



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment and Earning. Dec, 1970. Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1972. P.231, No. 367 (Employed persons, by Occupation and Race).
Chinatown Report '69, P.53.

afford the visitor an unforgettable experience. The women have tea together and some may even prepare a lunch there. Since the women work such long hours, the factory also becomes the center of their social life.

Among the garment workers, the lowest paid are those who trim threads, turn the garment, and either hang or put a plastic wrapper over the finished products. They are usually paid \$0.02 per piece.²¹ Thus, sometimes, children of the workers come after school hours to help. Wages for the pieces they finish are usually added to the mother's pay. Many of the women work 10-12 hours a day, 6 or 7 days a week. This frequently leads to ill health and neglect of family.

In May, 1972, the Department of Labor filed injunctions against 52 of the Chinatown shops, charging them with willful failure to keep proper time and pay records. But the bad thing about this situation is that most of these workers do not understand either English or the legal process in the United States. So they refused to testify against their bosses. Moreover, insufficient day care facilities in Chinatown may mean that a mother will have to smuggle her child into the factory, a high crime rate in the area may make her anxious to bring an aging mother to work. The employer can be expected to extort further concessions for these favors.

Since many of the Chinese in the area cannot speak English that barriers them from seeking employment outside

the Chinatown. The influx of thousands of immigrants annually into the Chinese community has, of course, greatly aggravated existing problems.

Many newly arrived immigrants, unaccustomed to American standards and so grateful to be in this country tolerate, without complaint the living and working conditions intolerable to an American worker. These oppressed immigrants are so afraid of losing their jobs that they will not complain about anything. While their exploitative employers thrive on a supply of cheap labor, the workers will not report obvious law violations to responsible government agents such as the Housing and Labor law enforcement officials.

The following is an example to illustrate how many difficulties that a Chinese immigrant can meet when he seeks a fair chance for equal employment.

Jung Tin Hu, according to the City's largest Municipal Employee Union, couldn't land a job with the city as a result of a new requirement set forth by the Department of Personnel: "The ability to speak American English."

Jung Tin Hu learned the awful truth after placing sixth among all applicants in a written test for mechanical engineering from Rensselaer Polytechnical Institute and is working for his Ph.D. He was fired March 29th after the Department of Personnel judged that he could not speak "Standard American English."

Incensed by the new requirement and the firing of Hu, District Council 37 of the State, County, and Municipal Employee Union, representing 100,000 city workers, demanded to know from the Department of Personnel just what constituted "Amercian English."

The Department thought about the problem and came up with a new definition which it inserted into its examination notices: "All applicants must have the ability to speak Standard English as spoken in the United States."

"No good", howled the Union, pointing out that the dictionary definition of American English is "the English language as used in the United States."²²

This case has awakened some Chinese immigrants to discussing about how to protect themselves from unfair treatment.

3. Education:

Traditionally, Chinese value education as a way to get ahead and in the United States, they recognize education means a better job. Parents in Chinatown generally encourage their children to go to school and stay there.

Because their language difficulties and long working hours, once the children are in school, many of the parents are unable or reluctant to participate in any parent-teacher activities, and few of them understand the adjustment strains that the children might face.

The quality of education for Chinese students in the various schools varies significantly. The primary difference

is some schools offer remedial English instruction with Chinese speaking staff, others do not. Adding bilingual Chinese staff is impeded by the citizenship requirement for all staff, even such professionals would be of great service to the teaching programs which are desperately needed.

It is not uncommon to hear a Chinese American student complain about applying for scholarship aid where minority groups are purportedly given special consideration to be informed by the interviewer that the Chinese American student is not eligible since he is a "Chinese American", and therefore not a "minority" within the purposes of the scholarship program. The emphasis for the minorities is for Blacks and Puerto-Ricans and not for Orientals.

They felt that they have been treated with a quasi-minority status in the United States, because they receive less than equal treatment accorded other minority groups.

4. Health and elderly problems:

There is no public health clinic within the Chinatown area. Most of the elderly patients in Chinatown do not go to the doctor until they are really sick, and few of them ever see a doctor outside the hospital. The reason is that when they need medical care or need anything from the "outside world", the old people must seek the assistance of someone who speaks English and understands the regulations. However, they may find themselves captive clients of those who can help them. Some of the local associations and individuals

versed in these things charge a sum of 5 dollars or 10 dollars to interpret a letter to the hospital, or to the social welfare office. In fact, one old man stated that even when they are sick, they may be asked to pay a special fee for someone to get them the right kind of medicine or food.

Five or ten dollars is a huge sum to someone who lives on less than one hundred dollars a month. As a result, many elderly do not go to the doctor, the welfare office or any other place where English is spoken.

The lack of a public clinic in the immediate area of Chinatown is critical. Perhaps even more important is the need for bilingual staff in all of the existing medical facilities that serve Chinese patients.

Chinatown's elderly men, called "Gum San Hok" or bachelors, live alone spend their days sitting on benches or playing Chinese chess. They are not technically bachelors, but are the victims of contemporaneity political situation. They left wives and children in China many years ago and came to the America to make their fortunes. But after the found of New China since 1949, by their own suspicious and by the hostile attitude toward China of the United States government, the "Gum San Hoks" could not go back home to join their families.

In Chinatown, many of them live alone in a small room with minimal facilities, they suffer from bad health, malnutrition, loneliness. Because of the lack of family life, the

absence of respect and care, sometimes, this may lead to mental illness which frequently leads to suicide.

5. Youth and crime problems:

With Chinatown's long chain problems, the most serious one and the one demanding the immediate attention of both the Chinese community and the city government is probably the youth and crime problems.

To most New Yorkers the rise of youthful rebellion in the Chinese community of the city may come as a surprise. For the past three decades Chinese American have been stereotyped in the mass media as quiet, docile and filial, a people who are as unlikely to espouse radicalism as they are to permit delinquency among their juveniles. In the last few years, however, evidence has mounted to suggest a discrepancy between this somewhat saccharine image and reality, not only is there an unmistakable increase in delinquent activity among Chinese young people, there is a growing restlessness among them as well.

Chinatown's younger generation feels a gnawing frustration over hidebound local institutions, the powerlessness of youth and their own bleak prospect for the future.

The politics as well as the crime of Chinatown are coming to resemble those of the large society, with alienation, race consciousness and social and organizational energies.²³ The basic cause for the emergence of youthful problems among the Chinese may be as follow:

A. The increase in the youth population. There are more youths in the community now than there have ever been before, a fact that can be attributed to an increasing birth rate among the indigenous population and a sudden rise in immigration.

B. Children lack proper supervision and parental care, due to many parents working long hours and seldom at home. The once tight Chinese family structure, of which Chinese are so proud no longer exists. Many youth are embarrassed by their parents' menial jobs and do not respect their parents at all.

C. The crowded home conditions and lack of parental supervision, the youths roam the streets after school looking for companionship and modes of self-expression, many youths become rebels against both the white and yellow cultures. Their identity, aspirations and pride degenerate had waste away. They become frustrated and hostile toward their environment and society. They recklessly roam the streets in groups looking for "action" and excitement.

D. Because of the language barrier, many of them drop-out from school, and find themselves unable to enter the city's occupational and social mainstream. Some of them are eventually ranks of the quasi-criminal that are accused of contributing to the mounting incidence of delinquency in the Chinatown.

another aspect of crime is the spread gambling in Chinatown. According to the article done by Ron Cherow,²⁴ that within eight blocks area of central Chinatown alone, there are 36 full time gambling operations.

Legal fronts include political and social clubs, as well as civic associations. Those gambling halls have proved the battlefield for generation warfare in Chinatown. On several occasions recently, Chinese youth gangs have burst into local gambling houses armed with submachine guns, collecting thousands of dollars in cash from the terrified elders. Anxious to protect their games, or perhaps their own reputations, the victims never reported these crimes to the police. Many owners of those gambling house start to hire the young gangsters to protect their business, this make the crime situation even more serious from competition over these operations.

The Chinatown youth gangs, with the names like "White Eagles", "Flying Dragons", "Ghost Shadows", probably comprise a small minority of the neighborhood teenagers. But their presence reflects, in distorted and often magnified form, a social malady that afflicts a majority of the Chinatown families. According to some personal knowledge, many local residents, mostly women and elderly, had been robbed; many stores had been blackmailed; but have not reported to the police, due to their unfamiliar with legal processes, and deficient ability in English.

6. Organizations:

In 19th century, benevolent association, generally known as the Chinese six companies, became the chief spokesman and protector of the Chinese immigrants. The establishment of this centralization was necessary because the Manching Empire government in China did not send any official representatives to the United States until the late 1870's. In the interim, the Chinese six companies had acted as semi-official spokesman²⁵ for the Manching government.

Increased with the white hostilities and the disputes between different family associations and other groups within the Chinese community also made centralized action necessary. However, the historical character of the Chinese six companies was largely molded during the first fifty years of Chinese immigration, in a significant measure through the crises associated with the Chinese exclusion movement. The ability of the Chinese six companies in repealing local, state, and federal anti-Chinese laws, its ingenuity in rallying internal cohesion, and its efforts, although fruitless, in mobilizing external support, inevitably made the Chinese six companies the only spokesman and government for the Chinese community. However, the new role played by the Chinese six companies only drew more criticism from the white community. Therefore it has been stated that the Chinese community was "a government within a government with laws, customs, courts, and institutions of their own."²⁶

One may expect the six companies to have the largest participation, since this is one place where new arrivals could seek assistance from others in the early days. But according to the Chinatown Report '69, only 18.9 percent of the households interviewed have one or more members who participate in family name associations.

Apparently, those old Chinese organizations have little influence on the new immigrants today.

Stuart Cattell, in his report of August, 1962, linked the family name associations primarily with the power elite, they didn't perform the services for those who really need them.²⁷ Thus, the low rate of participation among the new arrivals is perhaps not surprising.

CHAPTER V

PHYSICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS OF CHINATOWN

Besides the social aspects, the physical environment of a neighborhood is another important factor to the health and well-being of the local residents.

1. Housing:

In this section, housing conditions, the most important and immediate environmental problem are examined. There was only one new residential building has been built since 1939,. About 34 percent of the housing condition are classified as dilapidated in Chinatown area.²⁸

Most of the buildings were in bad shape, and under poor management. The Chinatown Report '69 evokes some real image of the housing condition in Chinatown.²⁹ That a great majority of families rent their apartments while only 0.9 percent are owners and 2.4 percent are on a cooperative housing (Chatham Towers and Chatham Green). Monthly rent is rather low, the median is close to about 50 dollars per month. 90.7 percent pay less than 100 dollars per month for their apartments. For the majority of the households, the rent included charges for water and electricity.

The rent/income ratio is around 11 percent which is below the preferred ratio of 20 percent. The average size of the apartments is three rooms. If the standard limitation of 1.1 persons to a room is to be observed, then 42 percent of the households are overcrowded. This is much higher than

the national percentage of 11.5 percent in 1960.

In terms of facilities, 2.3 percent of the households have only cold water, 4.8 percent have shared kitchens, 6.2 percent have shared bathrooms.

Besides overcrowding and lacking adequate facilities, the apartments in Chinatown have about 63 percent have had no paint job done in three years, 75 percent have absentee landlords, 85 percent are infested with pests, such as rats and roaches.

There is great demand for housing in Chinatown, perhaps owing to its location, many residents felt that it was hard to find an apartment in Chinatown, if they are lucky enough to find one, they often been asked to pay "key money" in order to move in the apartment.³⁰ "Key money", if required by the landlord, is an illegal way to circumvent rent control provisions which limit the amount of rent increases for a given tenant. Often, it is also a bribe for the superintendent or janitor to find an apartment or for information about apartment soon to be vacated. If the superintendent represents the landlord and if it can be proved that the "key money" is required by the landlord as a precondition for rental of an apartment, the landlord can be prosecuted for violation of the rent control laws. But it is hard to find any prove to back the charge. There is no written prohibition against "key money", even former

tenants can charge a fee for information about available apartment. This certainly imposes an extreme hardship on the new immigrants, as well as for those who have been here for a long time, since it involves a large sum that demands immediate payment at one time.

Not only do many families in Chinatown have to pay exorbitant sums in order to obtain an apartment, a large majority also find that the landlord offers few services. However, that so many receive inadequate services from their landlord might not be too surprising, because 46 percent of the tenants do not know where the landlord resides.

2. Commercial space:

At present, any available and usable ground floor space in Chinatown is taken up by some sort of a commercial establishment.

Many garment industry located in old loft spaces, this industry has been expanding rapidly and the shortage of space has already caused some of them using the sidewalk as their storage place.

3. Traffic situation:

Chinatown is almost isolated by three traffic arteries that pour large numbers of automobiles and trucks around the core. These three, Bowery, Canal and Park Row, all connect to the Manhattan Bridge, which carries a large amount of cross-town traffic that congests Canal Street most time of the day.

During weekdays, the narrow streets within Chinatown are full of trucks, vans, and other delivery vehicles. Especially in the morning, the streets are clogged by delivery of all kinds of goods and vegetables to many commercial establishments, and by loading vehicles taking wholesale goods from Chinatown for delivery throughout the metropolitan area.

On weekends and particularly on Sundays, Chinatown is full of pedestrians and cars. Not only is Canal Street full of automobiles, but the intersection of Mulberry and Canal, is frequently an impossible jam of automobiles coming from the bridge to make a left turn into Mulberry, and because so many streets on the lower east side are two-way, the turning movements at intersections present severe problems. In addition, the lack of any sizeable parcels of vacant land results in an shortage of off street parking and loading facilities. The frequency of double parking, and loading, unloading on narrow, crowded streets, further adds to the heavy traffic congestion.

CHAPTER VI

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Social aspects:

Examining the existing problems in Chinatown, it is clear that social conditios are inseparable from the physical environment. An overall strategy of development program for the regeneration and improvement of the community would be necessary.

The type of programs would require larger expenditures for city services---increased school budgets; expanded health and welfare serveces; increased activity by O.E.O. groups and private community service organizations,. Primary emphasis would be placed on special counseling and language programs. Because of the intricate social structure of the community and the language problem, the city might choose to operate these services through special agreements with community organizations. However, a new form of the community organization can be expected to undertake this mission.

From the datum gathered through readings, interviews and observations, that the present needs of Chinatown will be included:

A. Reform the existing organizations:

Based on the understanding that solution of most the existing social problems underling on several factors:

- a). The community organizations need more devoted professionals and businessmen to join them.
- b). The real cooperation of governmental agents and the community organizations.

- c). The communications between the establishments, such as merchants, shop owners and so on, and the discontented groups, such as low-wage workers, young immigrants etc.
- d). The local organizations should not be dominated by a few selfish groups and individuals.

As recent Chinese immigrants have begun the process of assimilation, their transition has been further added by the existence of nationwide movements for minority rights spawned by the Black Civil Rights Movements of the early sixties. Active struggle waged by younger American Chinese has already achieved some degree of success in open areas of employment previously closed to Chinese. Thus reducing dependency on the Chinatown economy and the narrow range of occupations defined in the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries. All these factors guaranteed that never again will the community of Chinese in America exist to the degree of isolation and ruled by a village, family type organization that characterized Chinatown in the past.

The call for participation and self-control coming from the underprivileged and weaknesses in the structure and operation of local organization both point towards the needs of some form of organizational innovation as a prerequisite for solving the area's problems.

It is concluded that efforts directed at improving

community conditions will be doomed if they are limited to the use of old communication and action channels, less contact between the community organizations and other community organizations, other government agencies, such as city hall, police department, or school board. As a result a dangerous institutional vacuum exists in Chinatown which urgently needs to be filled with new political institutions.

The new political institutional structures in Chinatown suggested, are not intended to be come substitutes in the area for constitutionally established forms of government. Since the ultimate objectives is community control for improvement in the lives of the area's residents. City government must continue to be present in the community, and the community residents; their desire for autonomy notwithstanding, will need the service and institutions of local and federal government. Such a political partnership can only take shape if wisdom and constraint prevail on both sides, and if both know that each system is dependent on one another.

On the part of local government, this makes imperative the search for more efficient, less paternalistic, less complacent, more cooperative, and more imaginative ways for governing the local affairs.

It seems clear that relationship between Chinatown organizations and New York City authorities will have to be close, and it should be one of partnership rather than of competition or control. Neither complete independence from government

nor complete control by the government will work.

Other direction for the new Chinese organization should reach out to other ethnic group outside the Chinatown. This is a very important step, because more and more the community's problems are no longer a problem solely within the Chinatown. Only through cooperation can the people in that area have a concrete basis of unity to solve their mutual difficulties.

B. Special language programs:

A special language program that will enable the new arrived immigrants to communicate easily with the outside world. The language barrier is decidedly a setback to full communication between the resident Chinese and the American society, and will creat more or less on every aspects of the existing community problems, after all, English is the most important instrument for any one to live in the United States.

This language program can be financed by the federal government, and can be implementated by two methods:

- a). Hire bilingual staffs in public schools, give a remedial instruction to those young immigrants who need the special intensive English training course.
- b). Increase the English class in different scheduals for the community adults, so that the working people could have an opportunity to choice the most appropriate time to attend the class.

C. Counseling service:

Competent counseling by Chinese speaking people in all matters that will speed their adjustment or enable them to take advantage of the full range of opportunities and services in the United States.

Problems like wage exploitation, social welfare, and many other governmental social programs can be introduced to the people by Chinese speaking consultant.

Through this way, the people can understand what their rights are and give them the new idea of how to develop their potentials.

D. Job training programs:

Job training programs to advance their skills, including good educational opportunities for their children, so they can find a job outside the Chinatown and join the mainstream of the American society. In the long run, the result might eliminate the population pressure of Chinatown.

This can flaunting the plan of substantial grant of funds from United States Department of Labor to finance the new endeavor.

E. Establish a public service center:

The service center should including following services:

- a). Nursing home for elderly, where they would be charged according to "ability to pay", and provided with single rooms with light house keeping chores,

Chinese meals would be served, and a Chinese speaking nurse may be on the staff to assist when needed.

This establishment could be located close to Chinatown so the men could still participate in their familiar environment.

- b). A psychiatric consulting center for the residents who encounter adverse forces upon them in areas of education, employment, housing, general adjustment, and other problems. A proper consultation may be administered to these people during the depression period, or very likely, the permanent damage might occur.

The job has to be done by the bilingual psychiatrist, since psychiatric counseling depends on communication between patient and the psychiatrist, an interpreter is completely unsatisfactory.

- c). To establish a business owners and workers cooperation association. Since many stores run in Chinatown are with limited capital, lack of business experience, and the small size of the shop made it impossible to break into the highly competitive apparel market in New York City. Also, the huge competition between owners themselves is cut-throat. Most of them live with very real fear that competition can wipe them out at any time.

All those reasons caused the low-wage employment, long-hour working tradition and usually lead to a

conflict between workers and owners.

The association could offer the owners with business information so that they can use their capital to the best investment and can avoid the suicide style competition with others. They can also organized the workers through education, so can eventually do away with the contradictions between bosses and their workers altogether.

2. Physical aspects:

Due to the lack of vacant, buildable sites, the poverty, and the strict locational needs of the commercial uses, the physical redevelopment of Chinatown, although urgent, is extremely problematical.

Geographically, Chinatown like many other ethnic communities in the Lower East Manhattan, are caught in a space squeeze: To the south, Park Row will be depressed in the area adjacent to the Civic Center. A new Police Headquarter was constructed to the south west of Chatham Green. To the east, the proposed Lower Manhattan Expressway will form an area surrounding Chinatown from the Manhattan Bridge, north to Broome and Kenmare Streets then around towards the west to the Holland Tunnel. There are only two real possibilities:

- a). North across Canal Street into the Italian section or to the south-east into the two bridges area.

Some expansion in each area has already taken place.

But the Italian immigrants will probably settle in

the same area. Thus, opportunities for growth of the Chinese community north of Canal St. is limited.

- b). The investigate should go to south-east. A number of vacant sites used only for parking and numerous old industrial structures which are underutilized.

However, even the further physical development seems limited by its location, but there is no doubt that Chinatown is the center of the daily activities and means of support of its residents. As discussed before, Chinatown is the place where they can locate for jobs, foodstuffs, entertainment and social activities. The Chinatown Report '69 has indicated the following facts:

<u>Location of</u>	<u>Percentage indicating in Chinatown</u>
Grocery Purchases	93.5%
Job	50.3%
Non-food purchases	40.4%
Entertainment and recreation	72.7%
Friends	75.4%

Besides these factors, Chinatown is a place that can provide its residents the sense of identity. This identity is a rather intangible quality. Even when it exists, it is often difficult to pinpoint. The local people can feel a distinct heritage, ethnic make-up, and activity pattern.

Thus, I do not believe that by remove all the existing building with new buildings can solve the housing problems

in Chinatown.

There are several other reasons to prove that torn down the existing Chinatown and build a new one does not appear to be a viable solution:

- a). Public redevelopment does not seem warranted because this is a prosperous area of the city, generating sufficient return on investment to justify private improvements.
- b). Without public redevelopment, major new construction is not feasible, because of the difficulty of land assembly, private investment will be primarily in the form of rehabilitation.
- c). Reconstruction of the core of Chinatown is probably undesirable in any case because of the large numbers of people and business to be dislocated and because the unique character and bustling activity of the area would be destroyed.

The opportunities for physical development in Chinatown, maintaining its existing busy character. Small scale expansion and new construction primarily in the two bridges area, with some new housing construction in the Italian section north of Canal St. Expansion of the Chinese community in either area should come about only through joint planning with other neighborhood's residents in the area.

Most area of Chinatown are within C6-1, or commercial zone. The C6-1 zone is:

"Designed to provide for the wide range of retail, office, amusement, service, custom manufacturing, and related uses normally found in the central business district."

However, the maximum allowable bulk in the C6-1 zone will permit the redevelopment of either the existing commercial or the residential uses, but not both. In short, a redevelopment program within the present C6-1 zone could eventually destroy the unique clusters of commercial activity of Chinatown.

If the commercial activity is to survive, new zoning technique with the flexibility to redevelop the existing complex land uses will be necessary.

A major recommendation of this report, therefore, is that the C6-1 zone to be overlaid by a special zoning district. Assuming a "Special Priority Relocation District" is established the special zoning district would permit the redevelopment of the existing community on a project by project basis by granting temporary waivers allowing staging on discrete, non-continuous sites and by increasing the maximum allowable bulk and density.

Since this zoning problem does not specify only to Chinatown, thus the number of community organizations in the whole Lower East Side and the complexity of their

CHAPTER VII

THE CHALLENGE TO PLANNERS

Betty Lee Sung wrote that: "Chinatown are not peculiar to the United State."³¹ This is true also of other immigrant minority groups who invariably concentrate in an area that readily becomes identifiable as an ethnic enclave such as Little Italy, Little Tokyo, Greek Town, and the like.

The reason for the existence of these ethnic neighborhoods is because the immigrants seek economic and social betterment. Many of them, after a period of acculturation and transition, would leave the neighborhood and start their better life in other places all over the United States.

Chinatown, like all other ethnic neighborhoods in the United States, is a very special place. The problems of Chinatown are broad and present a challenge to planners, citizens, and "ethnics" in finding solutions for all the various ethnic community's problems in North America.

There are some strategies which can be applied to the American ethnic neighborhoods. These strategies are outlined in the following paragraphs along with an attempt to analyze their implications.

Strategy 1:

The easiest alternative is to allow the community to go on as it always has with no special planning program. Two questions are raised by this strategy:

- a). Can the community survive without such program?
and if so, what would it be like?
- b). Should the ethnic community be encouraged to
survive? and if it fails, how could its positive
services continue?

To answer these questions, perhaps we can visualize what may become of the community and its residents if a policy of "no change" is adopted. It would appear that the influx of immigrants will overwhelm the already crowded physical facilities of the area---the schools, housing, institutions, and even the streets. The result will probably be dangerous overcrowding and finally, forced dispersal of local residents throughout the city. So it seems that the community cannot survive without help, and we come to the question of whether the ethnic community should survive.

It can be argued that if no such ethnic community existed, the new immigrants would be forced to adapt more quickly and fully to their environment. In the long range, this may work to their benefit. Dispersal might also benefit young people who would encounter fewer conflicts between the two societies and would not feel that they were trapped in a ghetto. But on the other hand, these benefits may be purchased at a very high social cost. We must remember that in this society of rapid change, technical innovation, and hyper-alienation, any sense of security---of identity, is indeed important.

The new immigrants in the United States depend on their ability to survive the cultural shock. There is already evidence that many do not make it. The destruction of all ethnic neighborhoods would certainly not help this situation.

Strategy 2:

The planner can work with the local people, prepare a detailed evaluation of this special community and then create a plan to deal with the issues which reflect the needs of the local residents.

Of course, implementation of the plan would require some investment of capital funds, and expenditures for city and federal services. However, because of the intricate social structure of most ethnic communities and the language problem, the city and federal government might choose to operate these services through special agreement with the existing community organizations.

In this society the response to the needs of ethnic groups includes more than a collection of organizations and programs each doing its own thing independent of every other helping effort.

We must be aware of the networks that link together different programs, different services, and different persons in highly interdependent ways. The networks ought to link together people and cooperative structures (public and private organizations and governmental agencies) to

provide a wide range of services enabling people to provide for the need they are unable to meet by themselves. The total range of services should help people meet current needs yet be flexible enough to meet new needs.

Those public and private agencies may also share services and information, especially in the form of consultants from federal and city agencies, who assist the more local level of either private or public agencies in the planning and implementation of programs. The advantage would be that these existing organizations have deep roots in the community, understand some of its special problems, and could readily organize appropriate staff.

The objectives of this type of program would be to hold the ethnic group together, not in the sense of a ghetto but as a model community for immigrants that will prepare them for full participation in the larger society. This community would also become a valid alternative for those who are prepared to leave but prefer to maintain a close contact with their cultural heritage.

Implementation of Strategy 2 would require the establishment of a "Coordinative Community Council." This council is organized by a committee board. Members of the board are elected from the existing community organizations.

The Council is responsible for identifying local problems; coordinating governmental policies; and initiating

a plan of action programs to solve those problems.

The Council is served by a number of connected governmental agencies, public and private institutions with strong connections to local organizations.

The Council must establish communication linkages so that the goal and objectives of the plan for the community can be more efficiently carried out, as well as to relate plans, goals, and objectives of outside agencies (especially governmental) to the residents. The Council also must build linkages within the local organizations, in order to assure each person has access to information and decision-making responsibilities required for effective operation.

The following pages illustrate a planning concept about a ethnic community, and how it can apply to New York City's Chinatown.

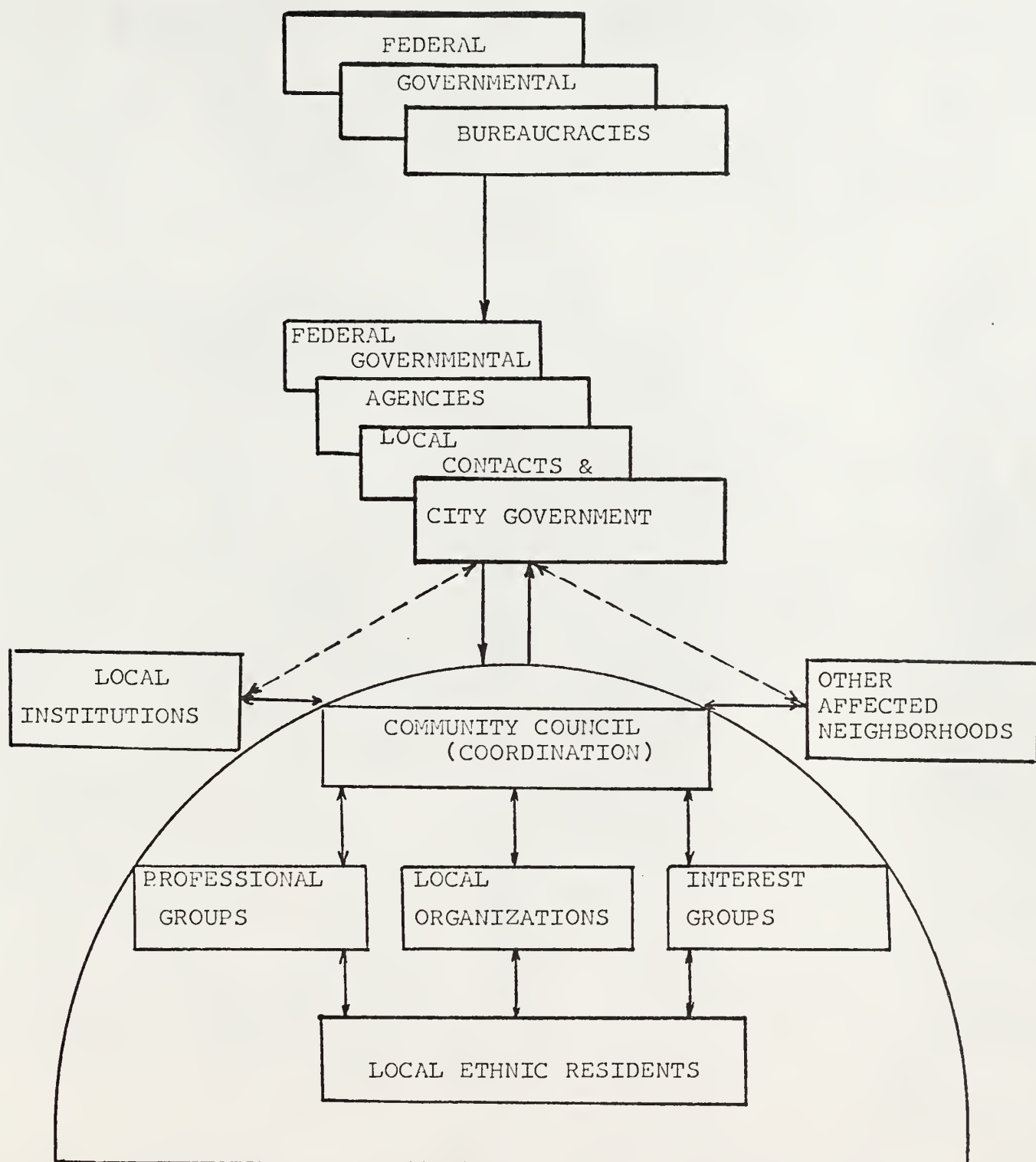


Figure 1: Organization Chart of Coordinative Community Council.

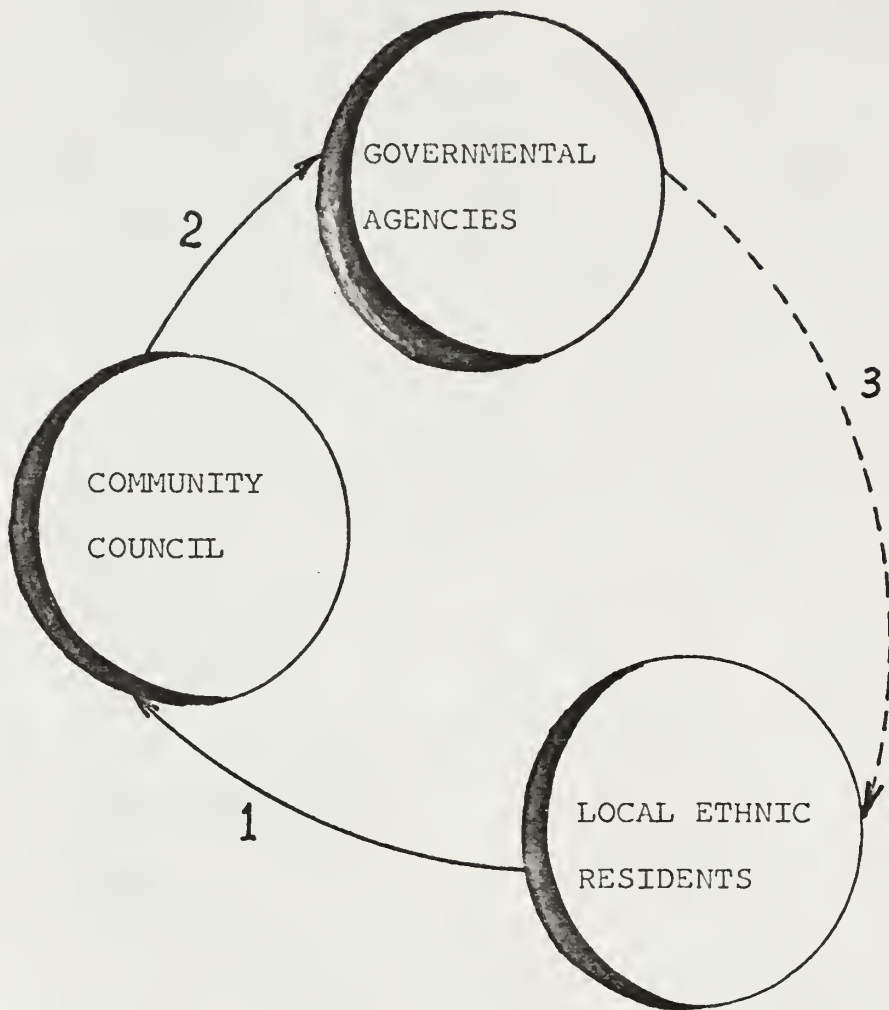


Figure 2. A model of planning for ethnic neighborhood, illustrates time dimension of the Coordinating Community Council.

At present, the local residents can not (have not been able to) deal directly with governmental agencies, but will receive services directly from those agencies through the coordinating efforts of the Council.

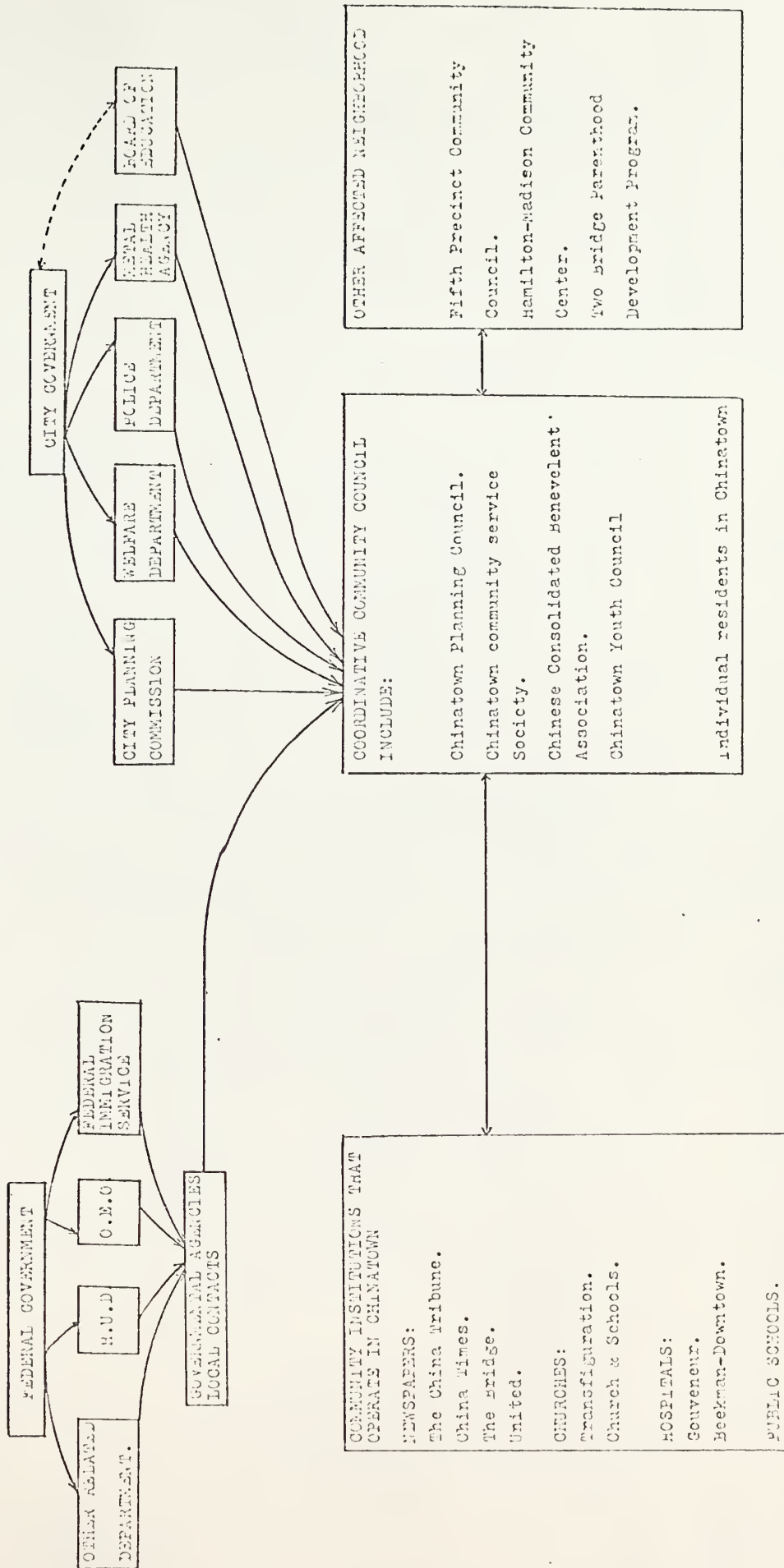


Figure 3: Planning Concept of Chinatown in New York City.

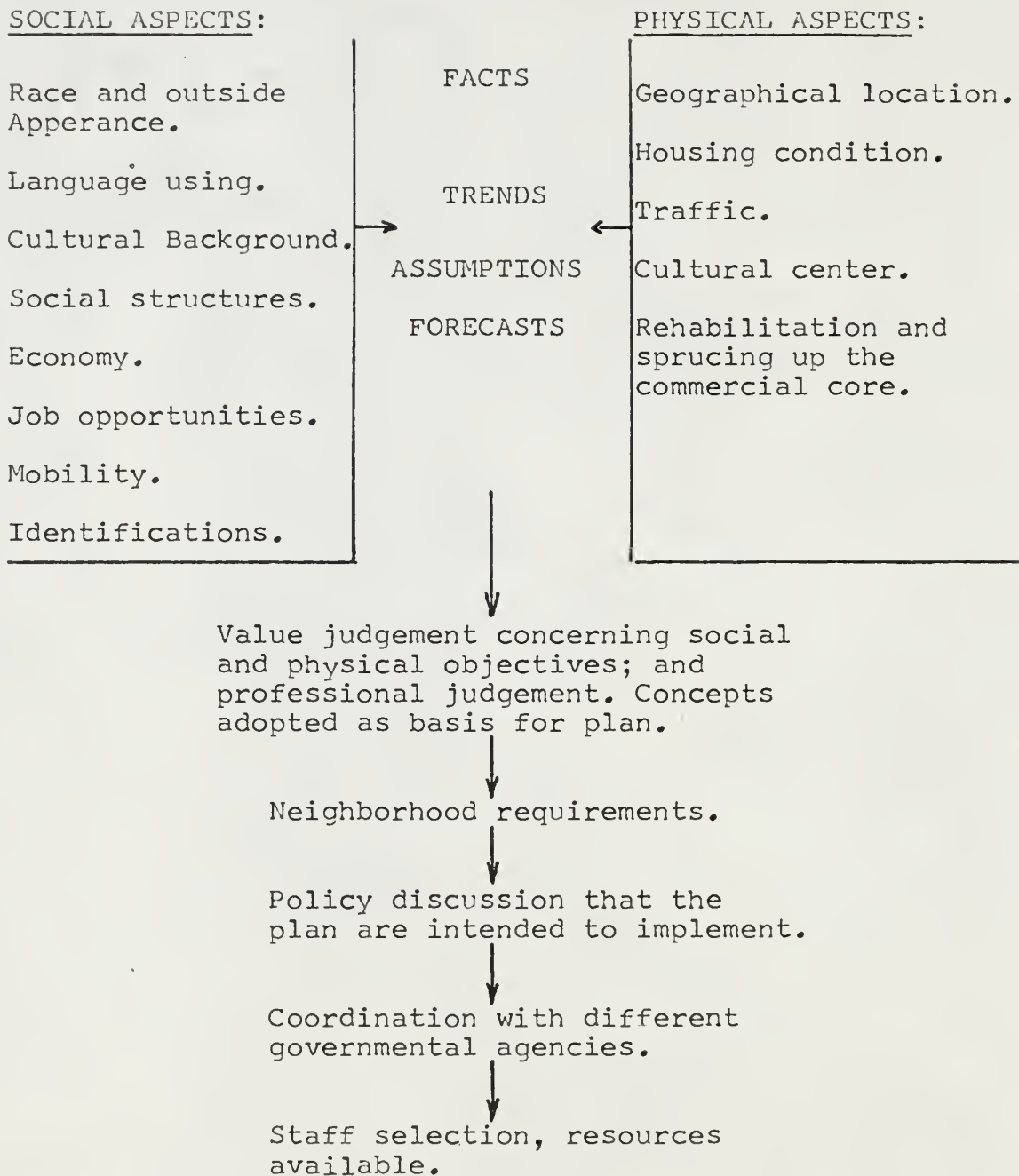


Figure 4. Subjects of major concern of the plan for ethnic community. Identifies key words or phrases which must be recognized in ethnic planning efforts.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

The process of adjustment began for individual immigrants on their arrival in the United States. The community and its institutions admirably fulfilled their functions for a succession of newcomers. Immigrant districts were responsible not for perpetuating old world traits and patterns, but for providing a vital first step in introducing newcomers into a new way of life. But the bulk of the earlier ethnic groups eventually moved out of the central city rather than live among residents new to urban life.

This cycle operated when Poles, Jews, or Italians moved into neighborhoods that had previously been inhabited by Swedes, Germans, or Irish. With the advent of the depression and then World War II, this process temporarily broke down. However, this process once again functioning.

The newest arrivals who have displaced Italians and Poles from their central city colonies are, of course, Negroes, Puerto-Ricans, and Orientals. Many of the same bitter complaints against these newest inhabitants---filth, crime, social demoralization and hopeless degradation---among others---and with good reason. They have only begun their adjustment to urban America.

In Chinatown, there have been many discussions with the community in the past about physical conditions. Despite the expressed wish for renewal, it has not been possible

to develop any plan that does not unduely disturb the inner residential and commercial community.

If the entire area would have to be cleared and new structures added, this would increase the rent and house payment of the residents, causing many of them to be displaced. If the Chinatown would be demolished, the result would be the redevelopment of a new Chinatown at some other place. Then not only it will break the sense of identity of the residents in this special ethnic neighborhood, but also the burden of the cost of this new Chinatown certainly will be born by the low-income people, samll businessmen and new coming immigrants, thus, defeating the original purpose of the plan.

I believe the overall solution for the physical condition of Chinatown should consider the following factors:

- a). Housing remodel instead of housing renewal.
- b). New housing project in the area should consider both the residential and commercial mex of land use.
- c). Traffic, parking, recreation problems are not the sole problems of Chinatown. The solution to these problems requires that the residents of the Lower East Side combine their efforts to achieve a common goal, that results in a better neighborhood. They should consider the value of cooperation in their specific area and consider their specific circumstances.

New York City has traditionally been the receiving center for waves of immigrants from all over the world. The Chinese immigrants, even in smaller number, need a point of transition even more than earlier immigrant groups.

I believe that if the government would extend a helping hand to these people through special language, counseling, and job training programs, there is a great opportunity for them to join the mainstream of the American society, to become useful, productive members of the society rather than welfare cases or juvenile delinquents, and to do it now would be far less costly than later.

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APPENDIX

SOME IMPORTANT IMMIGRATION LAWS THAT AFFECTED THE CHINESE IMMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES:

Burlingame Treaty of 1868: This bill recognized the "inalienable" right of man to free immigration and emigration from one country to another "for the purpose of curiosity, of trade, or as permanent resident." It further established the principle of reciprocity in privileges, immunities, and exemptions between citizens of China and the United States living or traveling in each other's country.

Chinese Exclusion Act of May 8, 1882: This Act suspended the immigration of Chinese laborers, both skilled and unskilled, for ten years. Teachers, students, merchants, and travelers were, however, exempted from exclusion. It formally prohibited the naturalization of Chinese in the United States. The Act was extended an additional ten years by the Geary Act of May 5, 1892. On April 27, 1904, the Exclusion of Chinese laborers from the United States was extended indefinitely.

Scott Act of October 1, 1888: This Act prohibited the return of any Chinese laborers who had departed from the United States. At the time it was passed, over 20,000 Chinese laborers had temporarily left the United States for China with reentry certificates. The reentry permits were declared void.

Immigration Act of 1924: Under the terms of this Act, no Chinese women were allowed to enter the United States for the purpose of permanent residence. Previous to the passing of this Act, wives of Chinese merchants and American born Chinese were allowed to enter the country, although wives of Chinese laborers were barred.

Repeal of The Chinese Exclusion Acts in 1943: On December 13, 1943, Franklin D. Roosevelt signed this Act which repealed the Act related to the Exclusion and Deportation of Chinese Aliens. This Act granted for the first time naturalization rights to Chinese Aliens. It set an immigration quota of 105 per year for people of Chinese race (defined as any person with as much as one half Chinese blood, regardless of country of origin.).

War Brides Act of December 28, 1945: This Act facilitated the entry of wives of men in the American armed forces to the United States. Approximately 6,000 Chinese women entered the United States under this Act.

Displaced Persons Act of 1948: Under this Act 3,466 Chinese students, visitors, and seamen were granted permanent resident status as "Displaced Persons".

Refugee Relief Act of 1953: Allowed the entry of 2,777 refugees of the Chinese Revolution, the majority of whom were Chinese. It further granted a total of 2,000 visas to Chinese whose passports had been endorsed by the Chinese Nationalist Government for entry to the United States.

Act of September 11, 1957: With this Act "Paper Sons" who obtained entry visas by fraud and misrepresentation could not be deported if a spouse, parent, or child was a citizen of the United States or a permanent resident alien.

Presidential Directive of May 25, 1962: This Directive signed by President John F. Kennedy permitted Hong Kong refugees to enter the United States immediately as "parolees". By June 30, 1966, 15,111 Chinese refugees were admitted. By the end of fiscal 1966, 9,126 of them given permanent resident status.

The Act of October 3, 1965: This historic Act was signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson at the foot of the Statue of Liberty. It abolished the national origin quota system on July 1, 1968.

Each independent country outside of the western hemisphere has a quota of up to 20,000 per year. Further, the quota is

accounted to the alien's country of birth, not nationality or race.

Persons born in Hong Kong, however, are charged to Great Britain's quota. The entry of these people is not to exceed one percent of the total visas issued to Great Britain in one year.

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